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Conservatives threatening to stall vote on defense bill

By Bill Gertz
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Senate conservatives have threatened to filibuster the Defense Department authorization bill until President Reagan reaches a decision on continuing U.S. compliance with the unratified SALT II treaty, according to congressional sources.

President Reagan was expected to inform Congress that he would be unable to meet the June 1 deadline for deciding whether to continue complying with the terms of the strategic arms limitations pact. The sources said he would seek a delay until June 7 to further consider options.

A number of conservative senators, lead by Malcolm Wallop, R-Wyo., threatened last week to stall debate on the defense bill until the president made his decision on continued U.S. compliance. Other senators supporting the idea of a filibuster are Sens. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., and Steve Symms, R-Idaho.

Now that it appears the president will delay his decision until June 7, the senators plan to hold off further debate by presenting government documentation on Soviet arms-control breaches as a protest to the administration delay.

The aim of extended discussion on Soviet SALT II compliance is to forestall a proposed amendment to the defense bill that would commit the administration to abiding by the SALT treaty through next year.

Sen. Symms and Sen. Ernest Hollings, D-S.C., plan to introduce an amendment to the defense bill that would prevent the Pentagon from spending any of its funds on dismantling U.S. weapons systems to SALT II levels until the president certifies that the Soviet Union is found to be "in full compliance with SALT II."

Senior national security officials in the administration have agreed

that the United States should respond to reported Soviet arms-control violations with several options that would violate some provisions of the SALT II treaty, administration sources said. The options for the president's decision will be discussed among senior advisers at a meeting today.

Secret CIA reports on Soviet SALT II compliance reveal that the Soviets have violated two key provisions of the 1979 treaty. The CIA found that the number of Soviet nuclear weapons launchers — strategic nuclear delivery vehicles (SNDV) in arms-control parlance — exceeds the SALT II ceiling of 2,405 land-, submarine- and air-launched missiles.

The CIA also found that the Soviets have violated the ceiling on the number of multiple warhead launchers — also called MIRVs for multiple independently-targetable re-entry vehicles — permitted under SALT II. CIA estimates indicate the Soviets have exceeded the treaty limit of 820 MIRV launchers.

With the addition of 18 new land-based missiles designated SSX-25 with MIRVed warheads, the estimated total of Soviet MIRV missiles is 836, which is 16 more than allowed under SALT.

Under the provisions of SALT II, the Soviet Union had agreed to reduce its SNDV total from 2,504 in two stages to 2,400 first and finally 2,250. The reduction was regarded as a major Soviet concession at the SALT II talks.

Regarding the Soviet failure to comply with other arms treaties, the secret CIA study found that Soviet violations of the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty of 1972 "could have significant effects" on the U.S. capability to retaliate against Soviet targets.

The report says the Soviet Union has "probably" violated the ABM treaty by using surface-to-air mis-

siles in an ABM mode. The Soviet SAX-12 surface-to-air missile system is described as a probable ABM treaty violation since it can be used as an anti-ballistic missile.

The report also reveals that the Soviets "have developed rapidly deployable/transportable ABM components" and have "violated radar limitation with construction of the Krasnoyarsk radar." The Krasnoyarsk radar has been identified as a very large "phased-array" system for tracking targets on the horizon.

"All this suggests that the Soviets may be preparing an ABM defense of its national territory," the report states. "Such a defense could have significant effects on our ability to retaliate against Soviet targets."

An unclassified administration study of the U.S. and Soviet capabilities to break out of the SALT limits shows that the Soviets are already ahead of the United States in new weapons deployment:

- The United States is building two new bomber types to the Soviets' three.

- The United States has one new nuclear submarine in production, the Trident, to the Soviet's Typhoon and Delta 4 class nuclear submarines.

- The United States has the MX and Midgetman ICBMs planned, while the Soviets have four new ICBMs — SSX-24, SSX-25, SSX-26, and SSX-27.

- The United States has no ABM production line, while the Soviets have one.

- U.S. warheads can be multiplied only marginally, while Soviet warhead multiplication has been found to double with 14 warheads on one SS-18.

- The MX has no basing option except existing fixed silos; the Soviet SSX-24 and SSX-25 can be deployed in fixed silos or in a mobile mode.